

Governor's Upper Yellowstone River Task Force
Meeting Summary
December 12, 2000
Yellowstone Inn
Meeting began at 7:00 p.m.

I. Introduction

Members Present:

John Bailey, Chair	Jerry O'Hair
Mike Atwood, Vice-Chair	Rod Siring
Roy Aserlind	Bob Wiltshire
Brant Oswald	Ellen Woodbury

Others Present:

Allan Steinle, Ex-Officio	Adam Craig	Ed Schilling
Joel Tohtz, Ex-Officio	Jeanne-Marie Souvigney	David Potter
Terri Marceron, Ex-Officio	Tom Hallin	Karl Biastoch
Laurence Siroky, Ex-Officio	Jim Robinson	Duncan Patten
Dean Yashan, Proxy Ex-Officio	Jen Elliot	Jerry Johnson
Liz Galli-Noble, Coordinator	Alicia Bradshaw	David Cowan
Amy Miller, Administrative Secretary	Chuck Dalby	

II. Prior Meeting Minutes

The November 28, 2000 minutes were approved as written.

III. Financial Updates

1. Grant Spending Report:

Amy Miller reported on the following to the Task Force:

EXPENDED GRANTS			
Grant Name	Completed	Amount	Study Component
DNRC Watershed Planning Assistance Grant	6-30-99	2,100.00	Physical Features Inventory
DNRC HB223 Grant	7-30-99	10,000.00	Aerial Photography
DNRC Riparian/Wetlands Educational Grant	6-30-00	960.99	Hydrologic Response to The 1988 Fires
DEQ 319 Grant (1 st)	9-30-00	40,000.00	Coordinator Position
CURRENT GRANTS			
Grant Name	Amount	Spent	Remaining Balance
DEQ Start-Up Grant	49,138.00	23,737.28	25,400.72
DNRC RDGP Grant	299,940.00	166,983.08	132,956.92
DEQ 319 Grant (2 nd)	58,000.00	6,411.37	51,588.63
DNRC HB223 (Riparian Trend Analysis Study)	6,500.00	0	6,500.00
DNRC Watershed Planning Assistance Grant (Upland Study)	10,000.00	993.60	9,006.40

Amy Miller reported that she had contacted Mike Gilbert, US Army Corps of Engineers, requesting budget information for the spending of \$320,000 Fiscal Year 1999 Congressional appropriations.

2. Funding Updates

(a) Alicia Bradshaw, Bozeman Field Director for Senator Baucus, reported that the Corps has received \$650,000 of additional funding earmarked for the Task Force upper Yellowstone River Cumulative Effects Study. Senator Baucus and the other members of Montana's Congressional Delegation helped to secure this FY 2001 Congressional appropriations. John Bailey thanked Senator Baucus and his staff for their assistance, and mentioned that having the Delegation working together and supporting the Task Force effort has been crucial to its success.

(b) Liz Galli-Noble reported that the Task Force was not selected for funding by the River Network Watershed Assistance Grant program. The grant had been written for \$10,000 to support the Watershed Land Use Assessment.

IV. Proposed Wildlife Assessment 3rd Draft Discussion

Dr. Duncan Patten presented the third draft of the Wildlife Assessment proposal to the Task Force and public. Duncan reported that the only major change from the original draft reviewed by the Task Force was in Objective 4. Bird Change 1950 to 2000. The last sentence under that objective was edited to read: "The results will reveal the trajectories in species abundances over time and will provide information for future floodplain, riparian, and channel management decisions."

A short discussion followed and Task Force members made requests for clarification similar to those made at the November 28 meeting. Again, Duncan Patten explained that birds would be studied as indicators of other wildlife and their use of habitat.

Bob Wiltshire made the motion to accept draft three of the Wildlife Assessment, dated 11-29-00. Ellen Woodbury seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Jerry O'Hair supported the motion "with reluctance."

V. Research Team Presentation #3. US Geological Survey Hydrology Study

Steve Holnbeck, Professional Engineer and Hydrologist with the USGS, gave a presentation on the activities and progress (to date) of the hydrology study component of the Upper Yellowstone Cumulative Effects Investigation. The following information is an outline of his presentation:

Goal Analyze the potential effects of river management and bank stabilization alternatives on sediment load, channel geometry, streambed profiles, and water surface elevations.

Objectives

- Survey river cross sections (125 completed to date)
- Perform water-surface profile, delineate 100-year flood boundary, and mapping
- Sample bed material, suspended-sediment concentration and bedload
 - Streambed material
 - Suspended sediment
 - Bedload sediment
- Model sediment transport

Purposes

- Document conditions
- Input to other study efforts
- Help make decisions

Bed-Material Characterization

- Pebble counts
- Sieve analysis
- Pre-and post-runoff
- Surface/subsurface
- Mapping of changes

Modeling Tools

- HEC-RAS River Analysis System
- BRI-STARS

Outreach Activities

- Project WET
- Presentations to the Task Force and public

Other Activities

- Flow profile surveys (low, medium, high)

Future Plans – Field

- Survey additional cross sections as required
- Sample selected bedload and SS
- Map selected flood bars and banks

Future Plans – Office

- Quality check survey notes
- Input cross sections to HEC-RAS
- Add overbank portions to sections
- Analyze bed-load samples
- Analyze bed-material samples
- Develop sediment transport curve
- Input cross sections to BRI-STARS

VI. Outreach and Education Activities Updates

Liz Galli-Noble presented a draft agenda of the Upper Yellowstone River Workshop and asked for feedback. Liz, Duncan, and Jen Elliot (Montana Watercourse) worked together on the agenda. The Montana Watercourse will help with the planning, logistics, mailings, and facilitation of the workshop. Advertising for the workshop will be through posters and flyers. Invitation letters will be mailed to local landowners in the community. The workshop would be held indoors with lecture style presentations. Approximately one month later, a follow-up workshop would build on the Task Force Cumulative Effects Investigation topic, but would focus on an outside presentation and explanation of research data collection techniques used by research teams. The following comments were made:

- Is there sufficient time allowed to cover all topics on the agenda?
- Will the Task Force confuse the public by bringing in the Montana Watercourse to help host the workshop?
- Could the agenda also cover agency permitting?
- Does the Task Force need to have more than one workshop to cover these topics?
- The *Task Force Overview* session on the agenda is very important.
- The first part of the workshop focuses on the “whole river system” the second part of the workshop is Task Force and project specific.

- Duncan Patten would address the scientific aspects of the project, and John Bailey would address the political or policy issues.
- The Task Force needs to be realistic about the timing of the workshop and the length of the workshop in order to benefit landowners, or even to get them to come and stay.

John Bailey formed a subcommittee (Bob Wiltshire, Ellen Woodbury, Jen Elliot, Duncan Patten, and Liz Galli-Noble) to address the above-mentioned concerns, and requested that the subcommittee report back to the Task Force at the January 16, 2001 meeting.

VII. 2000 Annual Report

The Task Force reviewed the second draft of the 2000 Annual Report, beginning with the Letter to the Governor from the Chair. John Bailey asked for clarification of the “end date” for the Task Force Cumulative Effects Study. Chuck Dalby explained that funding problems and topographical map delays have put the project behind schedule. He predicted that the technical studies would not be completed until the end of 2003. Originally, the Task Force had been told that the technical studies would be completed at the end of 2002 and that 2003 would be the period to develop recommendations and finalize reports. After a short discussion, the date for study completion was documented to be the end of 2003.

The Task Force then reviewed the other sections of the report and several changes were suggested by Task Force members. Liz will make those edits to the Annual Report and have John Bailey approve the final draft.

Task Force members had a lengthy discussion on whether to use of the word “recommendations” or “options,” with regard to what they would be presenting to the Governor at the end of the project. They chose to use the word “recommendations” in all future Task Force documents. The Task Force also discussed the use of the words “investigative studies” and “research.” The Task Force chose to use the word “research”.

The Task Force reviewed the budget for printing of the 2000 Annual Report. The Park Conservation District has set up an account at Kinko’s in Bozeman, and will receive the government rate for all copying work. Liz presented a cost break down of several ways the report could be produced. She also gave total costs for 750 or 1000 copies and asked the Task Force how many copies should be produced. She explained that the budget may vary slightly depending on the number of pages and selection of binding for the final layout version of the report.

Mike Atwood made the motion to print 1,000 copies of the 2000 Annual Report, and that the budget not exceed \$2,000. Bob Wiltshire seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

VIII. Schedule Future Task Force Meetings

Liz Galli-Noble would like Task Force members to call her at 222-3701, if they will be unable to attend scheduled meetings.

Next Task Force meetings are:

Tuesday, January 16, 2001 at the Yellowstone Inn

Tuesday, February 27, 2001 at the Yellowstone Inn

IX. The meeting was adjourned at 11:00 p.m.